Mine blast casualties

106. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA:
SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU):
DR. AKHILESH DAS:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian troops posted along the 1800 mile border between India and Pakistan, while withdrawing from their positions, left behind the mines laid by them along the border;

(b) if so, whether any more casualties due to mine blasts have since taken place along the border;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken to remove the mines and to prevent any casualties therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) The Indian troops on the International Border (IB) have since been re-deployed. Mines laid on the IB during Operation Parakram are being removed and the requisite number of troops have been deployed for the mine clearance operations. Till date, the following casualties have taken place during the demining phase:

(i)	Killed	—	Four
(ii)	Injured	—	Forty Five

Personnel involved in the de-mining operations have been provided with protective gear including bullet proof jackets, helmets with visors and anti-mine boots. All efforts are on to keep adequate guards to ensure that no civilian enters a minefield by mistake and becomes a casualty.

Steps to boost the morale of Army Troops

107. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Army is suffering from acute fatigue on account of counter-insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir and Operation Parakram; and